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TO

LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF SURPLUS
POPULATION.

MY LORD, *Kensington, 13th Oct. 1824.*

I HAVE before observed upon your Lordship's adopting this doctrine of a *Surplus Population*; but the error is of such great importance, that it is necessary to eradicate it wholly, if possible.

You do not, indeed, elaborately lay down this doctrine of *Surplus Population*; but you adopt it as matter of course. The Public, if they gather any thing from what you and your Committee say upon the subject, cannot fail to gather this: that the people of this kingdom *have greatly increased in numbers*, and that this increase is an *evil*. Here are two distinct propositions, each of them of great importance: each, therefore, shall receive from me some attention.

First, as to the positive increase of the numbers of the people, I have over and over again proved, that the Returns on which such assertions were founded, are, unquestionably, a **LIE**; I have proved that they **MUST** be a lie. However, this great national lie ought to be regularly exposed once in every year, at any rate. I am not to be made to believe

that a thing is any truer for being printed in a folio form, and having a blue cover upon it. If I am told that these Returns are printed by order of the House of Commons, I recollect that it is that same House of Commons who, in 1809, voted, as may be to-day, that it was above all things essential that the House should *watch over and preserve its purity*; and who, having, as may be to-morrow, *proof at the bar* tendered to it, of a *seat having been sold*, voted (so help me God!) that they **WOULD NOT HEAR SUCH PROOF!** If I am told that I am to believe in the truth of these Returns because they are made to, and come forth from, the House of Commons, I cannot forget that this is that same House of Commons, a Report of a Committee of which stated, in 1797, that the Bank of England had not stopped payment *for the want of means to pay with*; when, as it afterwards appeared, and came out even in a Report to the House itself, that the Bank Directors had been "*alarmed for the safety of their house*;" and that the stoppage took place in consequence of the Bank Directors having applied to the Minister to *protect them against their creditors!* All which is fully stated and proved in Paper against Gold. If I am bidden to believe in these Population Returns because they come from the Lord WILLIAMS and the Lord CHARLESSES, my answer is, that those Lord

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CHARLESES and Lord WILLIAMS voted with VANSITTART, in 1811, that a *Bank of England note and a shilling were of equal value to a golden guinea of full weight*; and that this same House of Lord WILLIAMS and Lord HENRYS voted, in 1819, along with VANSITTART again, that a pound note and a shilling were *not equal to a golden guinea in 1811*. The history of this House of Commons; the history of its Acts, its Votes, and all its conduct, during the time only that I have been intimately acquainted with them, would be a most invaluable work. Fools are those who write lies about this House. The wise way is to write the truth about it.

To return to my subject; if I am told to receive these Population Returns with implicit belief, because they come forth from the House of Commons, I could give many reasons in answer in addition to the above; but looking upon those reasons as a great deal more than sufficient to do away any weight that might be ascribed to the *source* of the Returns, I rely upon the internal evidence afforded by the Returns themselves, to prove that they must be false. I have stated the proofs of this falsehood twice before; but I will do it again now. There have been, in the whole, three Returns; the first in 1801; the second in 1811; the third in 1821. There have been Returns for Scotland as well as for England and Wales; but I shall confine myself to England and Wales.

Your Lordship will be so good as to attend to me here; for my matter is very interesting. I am about to prove, from the internal evidence, that one of the first two Returns *must be a lie*. The first Return stated the population to be as follows:

Persons chiefly employed in Agriculture	1,524,227
Persons chiefly employed in Trade, Manufactures, and Handicraft	1,789,531
All other Persons, not comprised in the two preceding classes	5,017,434
Total....	8,331,192

This was what they said they had got in England and Wales in 1801. We next come to 1811, when we shall find an increase in the Return of one million two hundred thousand and some odd. But the Return-makers, and, of course, the Parliament, in setting them to work, now made a change in the *form* of the Return. They stated their distribution of the persons by FAMILIES, instead of stating them by numbers of persons, as before. The former Return told us that there were so many *persons* belonging to each class. This new Return told us what number of families there were belonging to each class. The new Return stood thus:

Families in Agriculture	697,353
Families in Trade and Manufactures, &c.	923,588
All other Families.....	391,450
Total of Persons..	9,538,827

Now, my Lord JOHN, here is a curious change in the course of ten years. In 1801, the idlers were five millions out of eight. In 1811, the families of the idlers were only three out of eighteen, or thereabouts; or, at most, four out of twenty. In 1801, the third class had nearly *twice as many* persons as the other two classes; but in the new Return, we find more than *five times* as many persons in those two classes, as we find in the third class. Ten years before there was but a million and a half of agricultural people, while there were five millions of idlers; but

now, there are almost twice as many families of the agricultural people as there are of those of the idlers! Ten years before there were only a million and two thirds of persons in trade, handicraft, and manufacture; but now, behold, there are *nine hundred and twenty-three thousand* families of trade and handicraft people, and only *three hundred and ninety-one thousand* families of idlers.

Now, my Lord JOHN, which was the lie? Of these two Returns, which was the lie? That one is a lie, nobody can attempt to call in question. The most brutal people that ever yet lived, the newly-imported negroes, who do not know when they are cut with a knife, why it is that they should feel pain; brutes like these could never be made to believe that both these Returns were true, though they were both printed, under votes of the Lord JOHNS and Lord CHARLESSES, and both came forth on foolscap paper, with a cover the colour of the Windsor Uniform.

A saucy scoundrel, with his pocket full of the public money, and his skull full of Scotch conceit, said that he would undertake to make any Roman Catholic believe that black was white. Very well, Scotchman; but Protestants must believe a great deal more than this, before they can believe both these Returns to be true. The two labouring classes must, as to *number of persons*, have been, when the last Return was made, 3,787,029. This must have been the number of the persons in those two classes, if the number of persons were correctly stated in the first Return. Upon the whole, there is an increase in the population of 1,207,635; that is to say, a SEVENTH upon the whole. Now, then, the following

was the statement relative to the first two classes:

Persons chiefly employed in	
Agriculture	1,524,227
Persons chiefly employed in	
Trade, &c.	1,789,531
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	3,313,758
Add a seventh ..	473,394
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Total number of the two first Classes, agreeably to the Return of 1801, adding a seventh thereunto 3,787,152

Thus, then, there were, in these two classes, at the time when the last Return was made out, the last stated number of persons; that is to say, 3,787,152. Now, then, for the proof of the lie: if the first Return were true, and the last Return also, there must, in 1811, have been amongst the labouring and trading classes, only **TWO PERSONS** and the third part of another person **TO EACH FAMILY**; that is to say, my Lord, not quite seven persons, including *lodgers, to three families*. No children amongst farmers, tradesmen, artisans, labourers! Oh! the scandalous lie! and even the stupid lie!

Let us, however, put down the figures; for this lie must be exposed and exploded. The people of the present day will, by-and-by, be called the most stupid wretches that ever lived on the face of the earth; but let it, at any rate, be seen, that there were some of us who were not thus beneath the brutes that perish. These two first classes had in *persons*, only 3,313,758. They had only this number of *persons* in 1801; and, good God! in 1811 the Lord JOHNS and the Lord WILLIAMS found them to have, 1,620,941 **FAMILIES**! What, half as many *families* in 1811 as there were persons in 1801!

Why the man that can believe this is worse than an idiot; and the man that affects to believe it, is a knave that deserves the whipping-post. Your Lordship, the year before last, were pleased to talk a great deal about the improvement of the people, in point of understanding, and about the great blessing of the increase of newspapers. Yet, I think I may venture to say that a considerable, in deed, a very large majority of the people, have swallowed down all these population lies as so many truths. At last they come to this conclusion: they **MUST** believe, that in 1811 there were only two persons and one third, including lodgers, to each family, amongst all the farmers, tradesmen, labourers, artisans, and manufacturers of this whole kingdom: they **MUST** believe this; or they must believe *one of the Returns to be a lie*. This conclusion is inevitable. I have frequently thrown down the challenge. Nobody has ever taken it up. Nobody has ever attempted to defend these Returns. If they can be defended, why are they not defended? Again I repeat, that we **MUST** believe that, in 1811, there were but two persons and one third of another person to each family of the agricultural, trading, mechanical, and manufacturing classes: this we must believe; or, we must believe one of the two Returns to be a lie. We cannot believe the first: we must be brutes to believe the first: therefore we must believe one of these two Returns to be a lie. Having come to this conclusion, which I will defy any one to drive us from, what ground have we for believing that the third Return has any truth in it?

This third Return was made in 1821, and then the population had swelled up to 11,261,437. Good

God! Why had not they put down thirty millions at once? Why did they not make the population of England alone, equal to the population of France? There is something so monstrous in this statement, that one is astonished that it could be seriously put forth to the world. If the eight millions have swelled up to eleven millions, in the last twenty years, what reason upon earth is there that the population should not go on swelling at the same rate? Answer this question, some of you, that propagate this lie. According to this increase, the population of England and Wales: Scotland is much too learned a country for me to have any thing to do with; and nothing will I have to do with it, in this case, at any rate. The Return-makers of that country, would, somehow or other, slip through my fingers. They have, on the other side of the Tweed, consciences so surprisingly elastic, and faces covered with so many coats of brass, that I do not care to have any thing to do with them. If I were to estimate the numbers of the Scotch, by the numbers of offices, places and pensions which the people of that country hold, I should take their barren and miserable country to be more populous than England, Wales and Ireland, all put together. However, I will have nothing to do with them at present. England and Wales have regular governments, and parishes. I understand them, but I never can understand any thing about the division of Scotland.

England and Wales, then, have, according to these Returns, had an increase of three millions of people in twenty years. I speak in round numbers; but to avoid a charge of misrepresentation, I will again state, that the numbers in 1801 were, according to the

Return, 8,331,192; and, in 1821, 11,261,437. It amounts not to quite three millions, but it wants only *sixty-nine thousand seventeen hundred and fifty-five* of the three millions. This is a mere trifle, when you come to talk of eight or eleven millions. There is no reason why the population should not go on increasing, and at the same rate. I defy any of the Lord WILLIAMS, Lord CHARLESSES, or be they who they may, to produce me any reason why this increase should not continue on, if it be true that it has been what your Return says it has been. Very well, then; let us see what a jovial company we shall have, or, rather, that the country will have, by-and-by.

In the year 1841 the Population of England & Wales will amount to . . .	15,000,000
In the year 1861 it will amount to	20,000,000
In the year 1881 it will amount to	27,000,000
In the year 1901 it will amount to	36,000,000
In the year 2000 it will amount to	162,000,000

Thus, a most jovial crew will Old England have, at last! And why should it not be thus, my Lord JOHN, if the Returns be true? In my calculations I have left out fractional parts; but I am quite near enough. And I again call upon the whole assembly of Lord CHARLESSES; defy the Return-makers to give me one single reason; to suggest any one argument, tending to show that this increase must not thus proceed, if the Return be true.

Then, again, looking back, what must have been the population of the country a few centuries ago? It is pretended by the population-mongers, that there were only *five millions* of people in England and Wales a hundred years ago; well! the devil! But,

did it take, then, a hundred years to add three millions, when we are now adding three millions in twenty years, and when we shall, by the end of the century, have got an increase *this hundred years* of *twenty-eight millions*. Surely we cannot be more blessed than they were during the last century. They had the House of Brunswick to govern them almost the whole of the time; and during almost the half of the century, they were blessed by the sway of the "Good Old King," and that of the "heaven-born" Minister, PITT. Surely our children and grandchildren cannot be more lucky in this respect than we have been. If, therefore, the last century added but three millions to the population, I believe that it added not a single soul; but if it did add three millions, how much worse than a beast; how much more despicable than the most stupid of quadrupeds must that man be, who believes in the truth of the last Return, and of the first also. One of them *may* be true; but both of them cannot.

No romance ever presented a more incredible tale to the world. To believe in this tale, we must believe that, only about four or five hundred years ago, long after the country was studded with Churches and Cathedrals, there were no people at all in England, worth speaking about. In short, as I once before observed, the monstrous falseness; the prodigious impudence, in this case, puts an end, at once, to all argument about the thing.

Before I go to the other part of my subject, let me stop to make a remark or two to you, my Lord JOHN, relative to your alleged great improvement in the understandings of the people of this country. Your Lordship seemed,

at the time that I allude to, to have made very minute inquiries as to the increase which had taken place, in the circulation of newspapers and of tracts. You found that these things had greatly increased in number; and your conclusion was, that this was an excellent thing, for that the knowledge the people had, of course, increased in the same degree. It would, perhaps, be useless to remind you, that, just in the same proportion that newspapers, tracts, and schools and Bibles have increased, **CRIMES** and **MISERIES** have increased. It is useless, perhaps, to remind you of this, but the fact is notorious, and you, yourself, had evidence of it from the mouths of witnesses brought before your Committee. Is it, then, an increase of *knowledge* that has taken place? No. And the people of England, Scotland and Ireland, are, in many respects, the most ignorant in the world; particularly as to those public matters, with regard to which they ought to be well informed. The press, and all that passes through it, with very little exception, is calculated to deceive and enslave. In no other country upon earth would this population-lie have been sucked down by the people. In no other country would it have been attempted to palm such a lie upon the people; and this will be amongst the things to be quoted hereafter, in proof of the degradation of the people of the present day.

I now come to the population of Ireland, concerning which, nothing that we find in Munchausen can equal the stories that we have heard about the population of Ireland. These stories would have passed by unnoticed, had it not been for a Report to the House of Commons, made from one of its

Committees, of which a Mr. THOMAS SPRING RICE, appears to have been the Chairman. This Report is, indeed, a jewel. It, together with its Appendix, is all that anybody need have, to enable him to estimate justly this Parliament of ours. If any man will bring me a writing, I do not care where he brings it from, to *match* this writing of Mr. THOMAS SPRING RICE and his Committee, I will suffer such a man, if he choose to do it, to roast me by a slow fire. However, I shall, at present, notice no part of this Report, except the following, relating to the population of unhappy Ireland: "Various causes have been referred to, by the witnesses examined before your Committee, as being sufficient to account for the want of employment in Ireland. Perhaps the nearest cause may be traced to the rapid increase of the population. In 1695, the population was calculated to be 1,034,102; in 1731, 2,010,221; in 1791, 4,200,000; in 1804, 5,400,000; and in 1821, nearly 7,000,000."

There, my Lord JOHN, what do you think of that? What! The population of Ireland only ONE MILLION at the time when the Dutch King came over! Only one million at the time when the debt began! Only one million of souls a hundred and twenty-nine years ago, and that one million has bred other *six millions* in a hundred and twenty-nine years, and in England there were only three millions bred by five millions, in the course of a hundred years! However, why need one *exclaim*? It is not an occasion for indignation: it is an occasion for horse-laughter. After reading this surprising account in the Report, we are not so much surprised to find the evidence, taken before Mr.

THOMAS SPRING RICE's Committee, stating that the people of Ireland have been "discovered stealing manure for food." *Stealing manure to eat!* one can, in short, be surprised at nothing, after having read of the above-mentioned increase of population.

The Committee say that the population was **CALCULATED** at so many, at such and such times. Oh! *calculated*, was it? I wish Mr. THOMAS SPRING RICE's Committee had told us *by whom* the calculation was made at different times; under what *authority* those calculations were made; in what archives the calculations were deposited. It is vain to ask questions. We must content ourselves with expressing our surprise. Ireland had, long before the Dutch King ever set his foot in England, about twenty Bishopricks and Archbishopricks; between thirty and forty Deans; together with Prebendaries, and all other dignitaries of a great church. She had many noble cathedrals; and, I believe, **UPWARDS OF SIX THOUSAND PARISH CHURCHES!** These facts are wholly undeniable. Mr. STANLEY, during the debate on Mr. HUME's celebrated motion about the Irish church, said that the Irish were, when the Protestant church was first introduced, "*a bigoted illiterate people, possessing all the virtues and all the vices of savages.*" So, it was only *one million* of these "*savages*," who built the cathedrals and the churches of Ireland, who reared all these noble edifices, the far greater part of which have been suffered to fall into utter ruin, by the "*liberal and enlightened Protestant Church.*" Ireland is spread over with the ruins of noble edifices. There appears to have been more,

in proportion, in Ireland, than in England; or, at least, in great part of Ireland. Look into Grose's Antiquities, Mr. STANLEY, and then tell me who are most worthy of the name of "*savages*," those who reared, or those who destroyed so many noble buildings. I lately quoted a speech made by a gentleman in Ireland, who, from the very spot where he was making his speech, *pointed with his finger to the ruins of ten parish churches.* Is it not monstrous to hear it pretended that the people of Ireland consisted of only a million, long after the time that these edifices were erected?

For my part, I am firmly persuaded that Ireland was as populous as she is now, seven hundred years ago. I am sure that England was; and I can see no reason why Ireland should not have been in the same state. I will quit this part of my subject, with these remarks as to the positive increase of the numbers of the people, and with giving it as my opinion that no man in the kingdom, having any pretensions to the character of a gentleman, or a man of understanding, could be found to put his name to a paper, declaring a belief in the truth of the Population Returns. I am satisfied that the whole is merely a popular delusion; and that it will be viewed as such by everybody in a very short time.

But, now, my Lord JOHN, supposing there to be an increase in the numbers of the people; what *harm* is there in that? It has always, hitherto, been matter of *boast*. The first Return was trumped up by ROSE and PITT, in order to establish a belief in such increase, and thence to draw the conclusion that theirs was a most *excellent government*. You hold this increase forth as an evil:

they held it forth, not only as a proof of their good government, but as a *proof of the increased power and wealth of the country*. What a strange change is here, then. You seem to look sour at the poor little creatures as they come into the world. You look at them, as the country people say, like a cow at a bastard calf. Perhaps the best simile is, that look which is first given to the "*sweet babe*," the son and heir, which the husband suspects to have come into the world some weeks before its time. Now, this is just contrary to the practice of old GEORGE ROSE. GEORGE was the gayest of gossips at a groaning. And he took the dear innocent and kissed it, and chirped to it, and he held it out to gaping JOHN BULL as a pledge of wedded love between the PITT system and JOHN'S purse. Such a fuss there was about our increased numbers. It was laid down, in the first place, as a proved fact, that there were but *five* millions of people in England and Wales, at the beginning of the century. Oh! the Anti-Jacobins chuckled when they got their eight millions. It was actually made an argument against the Jacobins: it was produced as a proof of their wickedness in having opposed a Minister that could cause such a population.

The thing is all a lie, my Lord JOHN, from beginning to end: but, suppose it to be true, again, I ask, what harm is there in it? I ask how it is possible that an increase of the population could do any harm to anybody? If there be more people than there were to eat, there are more people than there were to work. One man's labour would raise food and raiment enough for twenty men. There can be no harm in an increase of numbers, so long as you

do not augment the numbers that do not work; so long as you do not augment these in an unnatural degree, there can be no harm in an augmentation of numbers. To be sure, a parcel of people might be brought and put down upon a barren island, a great mischief might arise therefrom; but I cannot see how any mischief is to arise from an increase of the people, provided that each mouth has a *pair of hands* belonging to it.

Our misfortune, Lord JOHN, is, not that we have too great a number of people altogether; but too great a number of people *who do not work*, and who live upon the labour of those who do work. To me it seems somewhat astonishing, that men, and in the House of Commons, too, can talk about a surplus population of the labourers, and say not a word about a surplus population of certain other classes, which I shall now proceed to mention. We have not too many labourers; nor do those labourers work too little. There is no harm in labourers having very frequent *holidays*, as they are very properly called. In the "*dark ages*," when I was a boy, we used to have a great many holidays of which the very poor devils of country boys now know nothing. I have done a great many wonderful things, my Lord JOHN, my name will live many a score years after me; and, I verily believe, that if I had been born in these days of slavery, of rags, and of hunger, I should never have been any more known in the world, than the chap that I, this very moment, see slinking by the side of a road wagon, with scarcely a shoe to his foot, and with a smock-frock that none but actual beggars wore in the "*dark ages*," when I was a boy. I was kept as tightly to work as any boy in the country. It was a boast of

my father, that he had three boys, whose ages put together made only that of a man of thirty, who did as much work as any man of thirty. Yet, in those "*dark ages*" that the impudent Scotch economists talk about, we had a great many holidays. There were all the fairs of our own place, and all the fairs of the places just round about. There were several days at Christmas, at Easter, at Whitsuntide; and we had a day or two at *Hollantide*, as we used to call it, which came in November, I believe, and also at *Candlemass*. Besides these, there were cricket-matches, and single-stick matches; and all these were not thought too much. But, still of more importance than these, I never knew a labouring man, in those "*dark ages*," go out to his work in the morning without a bottle of beer and a satchel of victuals, containing cheese, if not bacon, hung upon his *crook*. A *bottle-crook* made as usual a part of the equipage of a labourer, as his smock-frock or his hat did. Except in about five or six instances, in Sussex, I have not seen a *bottle-crook* these twenty years.

Accordingly, be it observed, that there wanted no schools, no Lancasterian or Bell work; no Tracts, no circulation of Bibles, to make the common people generally honest and obedient. I remember a little sort of fair, that used to be held at a village in Surrey. I remember the white smock-frocks and red handkerchiefs, and nice clean clothes of the girls, that used to ornament that fair. By accident, I stumbled upon it in a Rural Ride, two years ago. Not a tenth part of the people, and those, in general, ragged and dirty, with some few girls drawn off in tawdry cottons, looking more like town prostitutes than country girls; and this was a

pretty fair sample of the whole country.

The country people have been robbed by the paper-money. A complete revolution has been produced amongst them. They have been stripped of every thing in which they took delight. The imposition of slavery upon them, has made them feel and act like slaves. When the Reverend ANTHONY COLLETT told you how bad their character was become, it was for you and your Committee to look after the *cause*. And if you had, you would have found it in the cause which you, yourselves, had assisted to pass.

Man was not born to be *always at work*. Very shallow, indeed, are those who regard the numerous holidays of the Catholic church as tending to promote *idleness*. Men will do a great deal more work, if days of leisure be interspersed amidst days of toil. These days of leisure are necessary to their pleasure and their happiness; and it is of advantage, if the regulations of the community be such as to make the same day a day of leisure for all. In the "*dark ages*" we never heard of any complaints about a surplus-population; and be you assured, my Lord JOHN, that where such complaints can be made, there is something radically wrong in the state of the law.

The truth is, that the system which has been pursued in England from the time of the Revolution; the system of Government Debt, is a system which begins by totally abasing the labouring classes, and that ends by producing its own overthrow, and, generally, that of the State along with it. It draws property into great masses; it gives to cunning the superiority over industry; it makes agriculture a subject of adventure; it

puts down all small cultivators ; it incloses every inch of that land which God himself seems to have intended for the poor. It is curious enough, that even the Parliament should have seen the thing in this very light only about twenty years ago. The Secret Committee appointed in 1801, I think it was, to inquire into the causes of the high price of bread, and other provisions, determined, "that there was too considerable a consolidation and consequent enlargement of farms, and that the character of the farmer was lost in that of the speculator and monopolist, to the great injury of the public." Mr. PRATT, who wrote upon the subject at the time, mentions an instance, near Devizes, in Wiltshire, where one man had taken sixteen farms, one of which only he formerly occupied, and that the fifteen families who formerly occupied the other fifteen farms, were dwindled into day-labourers, and some of them were in the poor-houses. He mentions an instance in Leicestershire, of a parish containing four thousand acres of land. He says that in this whole parish, there is now only *one* farmhouse remaining out of fifty, which were formerly there.

Your Lordship must well know that this consolidation of farms has taken place all over the country. I do not believe that it would be going too far to say, that nine-tenths of the farm-houses of England have been destroyed since the day that the "good Old King" came to the throne. As if this were not enough, *large part of the commons have been enclosed*. Nothing that man could devise would be more injurious to the country than this. In all times it has been deemed by the common people a grievous injury. It drives

the labouring man from the only spot where he has a chance to alleviate his toil. It has always produced incalculable mischief. After the great plunder of the people, which took place in the reign of the bloody Henry, a system for robbing them of all the wastes was pursued, in the reign of Edward the Sixth. HUME tells us, "that the cottagers, deprived of the commons, on which they formerly fed their cattle, were reduced to misery : a great decay of people, as well as a *diminution of former plenty*, was [it should be *were*] remarked in the kingdom." At the same time (a debasing of the coin had taken place) the common people, *who received their wages in the debased coin*, could not purchase commodities at the usual rates ; and loud complaints were heard in every part of England." HUME tells us that the Protector, SEYMOUR, "issued a proclamation, ordering all late enclosures to be laid open by a certain day." In Devonshire, the people cried out against enclosures and oppression from the gentry. They demanded, besides, that the *mass should be restored* ; that half of the *Abbey Lands should be restored* ; that the *law of the six articles should be executed* ; and that *holy water and holy bread should be respected*. And now, my Lord, mark : LORD RUSSELL was sent against them. He found his force too weak to oppose them. He went and lay at Honiton "till reinforced by Sir WILLIAM HUBERT and Lord GREY, with some GERMAN HORSE, and some ITALIAN ARQUEBUSIERS, under BATTISTA SPINOLA." Thus assisted, RUSSELL beat the poor Englishmen, and hanged the Vicar of St. THOMAS on the *top of his own*

tower, arrayed in his ecclesiastical robes!

Alas! my Lord, how little do Englishmen, of the present day, know about the means by which the thing called *the Reformation* was effected! They did not dislike the religion of their fathers. It took a good three quarters of a century of the cruelest of persecutions, to make them submit to that order of things, which transferred the Abbey of *Wooburn* and the Priory of *Tavistock*, from the church into lay hands. My Lord, little do the people in general know, and yet they ought to know, that the bayonet and the halter were the great converters. But is there one out of a thousand that dreams of such a thing, as that *German* and *Italian hirelings* were brought over to assist in the enterprise? Yet they ought to know it at this time, when England and Ireland are tasting of the natural and ripe fruits of the famous Reformation.

Coming back to the subject of *enclosures*. *Great improvements* upon Bagshot Heath. But, my Lord, go down to Bagshot, and into all the parishes lying round that Heath; and there any intelligent farmer will give you a detail of the ruin and misery which those enclosures have produced; a detail enough to wring the heart of any man of feeling. And what have your Lordship and your Committee to oppose to causes so powerful and so destructive as these? The *Oundle Plan*? And what have the *MALTHUSES* and *SCARLETTES* and Scotch Economists to propose as the means of counteracting these causes? When you talk of an increase of population, you forget the probable half million of small farm-houses and of cottages that have been swept from the face of the earth by this funding system.

But, if there be a surplus population, ought there to be laws, to give encouragement to those *who breed and who do not work*? Ought such immense sums of the public money to be given to pensioners of all ages and of both sexes, that they may live in a state of ease and plenty upon the labour of others? Ought there to have been *sixteen hundred thousand pounds given to the poor Clergy of the Church of England*? *MALTHUS* and all his hardhearted crew, tell us, that to give the labourer parish relief, is to encourage him to breed children whom he cannot support. How comes this argument never to have occurred to those who gave the sixteen hundred thousand pounds to relieve the children of the poor Clergy of England? Was not that also a "*premium for population*," as it is called? Yes, and for population, too, who never would work. Not a word do we ever hear about this increase of population: it is the labourers only that you find to be too numerous. It is they only that you fear to see increase; and, while we have this outcry against the over populousness of the labouring classes, not a syllable do we hear, in the way of grumbling, against giving nearly six millions of pounds sterling a-year to what is called a dead-weight. It is reasonable and just, that those who have really and truly served the country in arms, and served it to some effect, should have a provision made for them. But, is it wise, is it just, that if, for instance, an officer marry and have a family of children, the country should be saddled with the *keeping of his wife and children after his death*? It is thought dangerous to give a labouring man a little relief, lest he should marry and breed children. But it is not

thought dangerous to give six millions a-year, or thereabouts, part of which, at any rate, must tend to increase population. To say nothing about the numerous standing army; to say nothing about the monstrous disadvantage of having an establishment of married parsons, can it be wise or just to bestow these six millions in this way? Amongst all the misfortunes of England, none is greater than that of having so many thousands upon thousands of married people maintained out of the public money, and breeding children who, it must be evident to every one, *never will work*. They are not only not bred up to work, but they are bred up in the firm belief that they have a right to be maintained by the public.

Would I sit in that House of Commons and hear all this talk about a *surplus population*; hear all this talk about checking the breeding of labourers, and not say one single word about these expensive encouragements to the breeding of idlers? I certainly would not; and, though I may hope in vain, I still will hope, that some man will be found in that House to put this matter in its true light, and to produce an alteration accordingly. Abuses go on for a long while with impunity to those who are the cause of them, but they do not go on *for ever*. Great military force keeps people down, but it does not pay the debts of a State. The labourers of England, being contented enough upon the score of religion, having always at hand some itinerant knave or other to cajole and entertain them, might probably go on a long while in their rags, hunger and thefts, of all of which there are great abundance. The Rev. Mr. COLLETT might possibly live to see the sys-

tem approach very nearly to that of the West Indies, in point of discipline; but in *Ireland* some great change must and will take place; and it is impossible that such change should take place, without materially affecting every part of the kingdom. That it may take place soon; that it may be just in its principles; that it may be productive of peace, cordial union, and strength and security, is the anxious wish of . . .

Your Lordship's
Most obedient, and
Most humble Servant,
WM. COBBETT.

JOCELYN-SCHOOLS.

For mending the manners and saving the souls of the Irish.

I HAVE before me a printed report relative to these SCHOOLS. They are called the schools of the "LONDON HIBERNIAN SCHOOL SOCIETY." But, this is a stupid name. The *head man* of the concern appears to be the EARL OF RODEN, who has, indeed, recently been *holding meetings* in Ireland, in person, for the purpose of promoting the object of the Society. He is what we may call the *acting man* of the house; and, as his name is JOCELYN, and he is also the *head of all Jocelyns*, I shall call these, the JOCELYN-SCHOOLS.

Now, as to the real object of the *Jocelyn-Schools*, it is evidently to convert the poor *Catholics* to be *Protestants*. I shall have more to say about this object, and about the motives to it, another time. At present I have to record a *Debate*, the very best I ever read. The *Jocelyn-school* people sent over two *Missionaries*, a fanatic of the name of NOEL, and a crafty thick-skinned *Scotchman*,

of the name of GORDON, a *Captain of the Navy!* These men went to Cork, got a large meeting together, and *opened their commission.* But, they met; the merits, not only of their intentions, but of the *two religions*, were fully debated; and, if there ever were a triumph more complete than all others, the "*religion of our fathers*" gained that triumph here.—The Scotchman was not spared. He had the lash well laid upon his thick skin.—I have inserted the whole of the debate; and I shall return to the subject very shortly.

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Defeat of the Missionaries of the
LONDON HIBERNIAN SCHOOL
SOCIETY,

In the City of Cork, at a Grand Meeting of the Ladies' Auxiliary Bible Society, held in the County Court House, Cork, September the 9th and 10th, 1824.

THIS Meeting was summoned for the purpose of hearing the Hon. Mr. NOEL and Captain GORDON, who are Members of the London Bible Society, and have come to Ireland for the purpose of promoting the objects of that Institution. The Court-house was crowded with Ladies, and a splendid and numerous assemblage of the Gentry of the County and City of Cork. JOSEPH DENAE FREEMAN, Esq. having been called to the Chair,

The Hon. Mr. NOEL said, that he had recently arrived in Ireland, and saw, with a feeling of deep anguish, the wretchedness, and the moral and physical degradation of the great body of the population. They exhibited a hideous and appalling spectacle. Their habitations were receptacles of filth, and their minds were utterly destitute of religious instruction. The calamities of the country, the spirit of violence and tumult, and all the fatal consequences incidental to it, might justly be referred to the absence of religious education, which would

teach them obedience to the laws, by teaching them to walk in the ways of God. In England the utmost anxiety prevailed for the religious amelioration of Ireland, and he and his friend had come amongst them, not with any idle anxiety to gratify a profitless curiosity, but for the improvement of the moral nature of the people, to which they were solicitous to contribute their humble exertions. The ladies of this great country ought to feel that there could be no object more worthy of their aimable solicitude than the instruction of the female portion of the community. Upon the virtue of a woman much of that of man depended, and the religious habits of the sex could not fail to exercise a salutary influence. The population of the county amounted to seven hundred thousand people, of whom it was just to presume that one half were females; and it was deplorable that out of that vast body so few enjoyed the benefits of education. In the promotion of this great work, they would evince a true and genuine sensibility. How many there were who shed tears over works of fictitious woe, and who failed to extend their emotions to any instance of practical benevolence. They should be influenced by a higher motive than ordinary tenderness, and should draw their humanity from the sacred springs of scriptural religion. He had heard with pain, that out of the whole of the sum contributed by the ladies of Cork, for the diffusion of the holy writings, one sixth had been raised by a subscription at a ball. Religion should do more than fashion. Benevolence ought to be less a matter of taste than of duty. The Hon. Gentleman proceeded with great ability to enforce the necessity of founding education upon the basis of religion, and of dispensing the Scriptures among the poor. *Their first object should be to make the people Christians*—Christianity was the best gift that could be conferred upon them, and its only source was, in the sacred word of God. The reading of the Scriptures had been opposed by pre-

judice, by scepticism, and by profligacy. Experience had proved that as the virtues of the people of England arose from their familiarity with the Scriptures, the vices of other countries had arisen from their being denied the use of that holy light. The honourable Gentleman described the horrors of the French Revolution, which, he said, were to be referred to the spirit of impiety which was allied with ferocity. That revolution had been prepared by the mock-philosophy which made the holy writings the theme of blasphemous derision. Education without religion would prove rather an evil than a good, and he strenuously deprecated any system of instruction which was not associated with the perusal of the holy writings. In them the poor would find true faith, and the principles of genuine morality, illustrated by the light of heaven: and those men were the enemies of the happiness of their fellow-creatures, who sought to deprive them of the only real source of virtue here, and felicity in the other world. They could not do a work more acceptable to God than by the propagation of his word, and it must be a matter of high gratification to them, that while they were advancing the spiritual interests of their fellow-creatures, they were securing their own eternal welfare.—The Honourable Gentleman sat down amidst loud applause.

Captain GORDON, of the Royal Navy, rose after Mr. Noel, and spoke to a similar effect. He appealed especially to Scotland, (his own country) as an instance of the noble results of a moral and religious education, and referred to some passages in the Scriptures to show the impropriety of withholding them from the people.

Mr. DWYER rose, and asked whether he should be permitted to make some observations in reply?

The CHAIRMAN said that the Meeting was private, but after some discussion on the right to speak, desired Mr. Dwyer to write a resolution if he wished to propose any.

Mr. KENNY said this was a Meeting in a great measure private, and that the gentleman who seemed dis-

posed to interrupt the proceedings, had an opportunity of attending a public meeting, to which however they did not condescend to come; but when a meeting was held for the purposes with which they had no concern, and the Ladies of Cork were assembled to hear two Gentlemen from the English Bible Society, certain persons showed a singular alacrity in thwarting their proceedings. However, if they were heard, it was from courtesy, and not upon any ground of right. He applauded the sentiments and language of Mr. Noel and his associate, in their great and good work. For his own part, he wondered how any man who believed in the Scriptures could withhold them from the people. Almost in the very first passages of that holy book, and in the commencement of the history of mankind, God had given intimation of his will that his word should be taught. He referred to several texts, from which he argued that Abraham, Moses, and David had received the same injunctions to teach the law from the Bible; and that in the New Testament the same principle is inculcated in the passages relating to Timothy. The darkness that covered this country could not be removed, except by the general perusal of the word of God. There was no other mode of rescuing the people from their hideous superstition. How disastrous was the ignorance and barbarism that prevailed in Ireland, when a mother permitted her child to be trampled to death by a wretched man, who pretended that he was armed with divine authority, and had the power to perform miracles.

Mr. SHIEL asked whether he should be allowed to make a few observations on what he had heard.

The CHAIRMAN said, if, Sir, you are a friend to the Society, you are entitled to speak.

Mr. SHIEL said, then, Sir, in one sense I am a friend to the Bible Society, and I shall evince it by an act of substantial friendship, in venturing to give you some honest, though it may possibly be mistaken advice.—(Laughter, and cries of "Go on.")

Mr. SHIEL said, that when the former meeting was held, to which a gentleman had adverted, he was not in Cork, and that upon that account he ought not to be considered as an overweening intruder upon their deliberations. They should not shrink from discussion, if it was carried on in a fair and mitigated spirit. The meeting was called private, but it exhibited singular evidence of privacy in the numbers by which it was attended. It concerned the public—a great national question was involved in its proceedings, and it was the right of every individual to remonstrate against a system by which the interests of the whole community were affected. He should studiously avoid giving offence to the religious sensitiveness of the ardent and lovely theologians whom he saw assembled around him. He regretted that some observations had fallen from those who preceded him, which reflected upon the Creed of the Irish people; at no time were controversial disputations well calculated to promote the real interests of Christianity, and they were peculiarly ill-adapted to the fair auditory whom he had risen to address. The religion of a woman ought to be an impassioned meekness, and that sweet spirit which was typified by the dove, should spread its wings upon them,—while he entreated their forbearance, and that pity for human error that was akin to the love of heaven, he should take care not to abuse their indulgence. He had heard Mr. Noel with pleasure. He had given proof of high intellectual attainments, and there was in his zeal an internal evidence of sincerity. In one sense only, was he an impostor, by practising a delusion upon himself. The Honourable Gentleman, and his *Caledonian* associate who had manifested so much anxiety for the spiritual welfare of the Irish people, and who was not only a Scotchman but a Captain, deserved much praise for the motives which had induced their religious excursion. *The nautical Divine* had combined the enthusiasm of his profession with the characteristic sagacity of his country.

Mr. Noel had pathetically lamented the physical degradation and utter wretchedness of the Irish people, and attributed both to the absence of scriptural education. Without comparing him to an empiric who would fain apply his own favourite remedy to every disease, he should remind him that the misery of Ireland arose from a vast variety of causes. He had just come from a country whose prosperity was the accumulation of a thousand years. On the other hand, the wretchedness of Ireland was the product of many centuries of calamity. Mr. Noel had started at the contemplation of that wretchedness—he, who was familiar with the luxuries of the English cottage, naturally shrunk from the miseries of the Irish hovel. He would ask, whether the vast diffusion of wealth, the extent of commerce, the number of manufactures, and the equality of the people, had produced the riches and the happiness of England; or whether her unparalleled greatness was all owing to the reading of the Scriptures without note or comment? Had centuries of iniquitous misrule accomplished nothing in the work of misery, of degradation, and of guilt? If the Hon. Gentleman were better acquainted with Ireland, he *would soon perceive that it is upon the higher classes that his religious labours ought to be bestowed.* This amiable itinerant would, in the course of his sacred peregrinations, soon discover *that it was not in the smoke of the hovel, but in the blaze of the banquet,* that the precepts of the gospel ought to be enforced—he would endeavour to impart the practical spirit of christianity *to the barbarous aristocracy of Ireland, to civilize them into pity—to convince them that their wretched serfs are made of the same flesh and blood as themselves, and belong to the great brotherhood of men.* With what indignation would he not behold the system of merciless exaction adopted by the Irish landlord, which is so widely at variance not only with the principles upon which the English proprietor deals with his tenant, and with the habits of his own great country, but utterly repug-

nant to the commiserating spirit of those holy writings, the perusal of which he so strenuously advocates? How would his honest nature be excited, when he saw the miserable peasant cast, in a winter's night, with his famished and naked children, upon the world? How would his religious principles revolt, and how would his humanity shudder at the scenes of desolation which are daily enacted amongst us? He would then perceive that his adjurations ought to be directed to those very men by whom he has been infected with his opinion of our country, and that he should begin by teaching humanity to the rich, before he taught polemics to the poor. In the delusion of a benevolent fanaticism, he forgets that the people are less in want of Bibles than of bread. God forbid that he (Mr. Shiel) should suggest that the lower orders should not receive religious education; he was of opinion that they should be instructed in the established tenets of their forefathers and of their country, and that they should be taught by means adapted to their capacities, the fixed principles of their ancient and venerable faith. Religion is peculiarly necessary to those, who, while the opulent find in the pleasures of actual existence many intense but transitory enjoyments, must look up to heaven for their only consolation. The Roman Catholic faith contains a body of moral precepts as well calculated to insure salutary results upon society as any modern theory in religion; and although Mr. Noel had said that he was anxious to make Christians of the people, he (Mr. Shiel) hoped that the hon. gentleman would not consider him guilty of any very extravagant assumption, when he ventured to insinuate to him that a Roman Catholic might, peradventure, be a Christian. Ireland was a Roman Catholic country, and Mr. Noel, if really anxious to diffuse education, would take into account the peculiar circumstances, the habits, the opinions, and the pre-dispositions of the people, in considering the means best adapted to the attainment of that important object. Mr. Shiel

in continuation, observed, that the general perusal of the Bible without any specific interpretation, was in accordance with the desultory genius of the Protestant religion; but in Ireland there exists a Creed utterly incompatible with that wild freedom of opinion, and which is so determinate and fixed, as to leave no field for the exercise of individual judgment in the construction of the word of God. The Roman Catholic faith is built upon the Scriptures as explained by the Church, and if the lower classes were to peruse them without that explanation upon which their religion rests, it is not unlikely, that they would contract opinions inconsistent with the meaning invariably annexed by the Church to the holy writings. In one word, it is against the principles of that Church to turn the Bible into a plaything for the fancy, and submit to all the gross vagaries and monstrous imaginations of every loon. The whole dispute narrows itself into a question of fact. Is it, or is it not inconsistent with the spirit of Catholicism? If it be, there is an end to the argument—at least it must be admitted, that Roman Catholics are justified in their strenuous opposition to an attempt to subvert their religion.—Now, who are the persons best qualified to determine that simple fact? One would suppose the Roman Catholics themselves were as competent to decide the question, as those gentlemen who have imported into Ireland a new assortment of curiosities in belief, and seem determined to establish in this country a manufacture of religions. But independently of the objections arising from the essential principles of Catholicism, is it not absurd to make a task-book of the Testament, and to covert the Apocalypse into a primer? The Scriptures have been referred to, in order to show that it was the will of God that they should be universally perused. For this purpose, some isolated texts have been tortured into a meaning which they do not naturally bear, while those who have poured out such a torrent of citation, forget that among the

Jews, and under the old law, *there were many parts of holy writ, which women were never permitted to read, and which men were not allowed to peruse until after they had attained 30 years.* When Christianity was first established, it was impossible that the Scriptures should have been generally read, for the art of printing was not known, and by no other means than that great modern discovery, could an extensive distribution of the Bible be effected. A manuscript of such bulk as the Old and New Testament, must have cost a sum which a primitive Christian cannot be readily supposed to have been capable of procuring, at a period when his poverty was a literal phrase. But let us try the expediency of an indiscriminate perusal of the sacred writings, by an appeal to experience. It will scarcely be contested that any great advantage can result from a multifariousness in religion, yet it will not be denied, that if each individual is entitled to construe the Scriptures, a great variety of interpretations must be the inevitable consequence. In truth, the inventions of art do not keep pace with the discoveries in religion. New dogmas are every day propounded to us. They issue with a marvellous fecundity from every visionary brain. Nor is it to the wise and the learned that the world is indebted for these fantastic revelations—*those mysterious intimations which have excited the doubts and baffled the sagacity of the most illustrious of mankind, are now simplified from the summit of a sacred beer-barrel, and from the depth of a holy stall. Every difficulty vanishes before the inspired interpretation of an illuminated Crispin, and the seamless garment of our Saviour is turned inside out by some gifted tailor, who alternately cuts out a religion and a coat.* Every village is infested with these modern prophets; one half of them are impostors, and the other their own dupes; but whether they be *Cantwells* or *Mawworms*, or both (for the union of hypocrisy and fanaticism is not unfrequent), the consequences to religion and to common decency and common sense

are disastrous. The lower classes of the Protestant community are driven into a sort of Biblical insanity by this system of excitation, and madness, now-a-days, almost invariably assumes a religious character. He (Mr. Shiel) would state a singular fact of the lunatics in the asylum in this city; there were a vast number whose mental malady was connected with religion, and amongst those who laboured under that peculiar insanity, there was not a single Catholic. This circumstance was stated by the benevolent physician who superintended the hospital, in a very able work, and that gentleman was himself a strenuous Protestant—(hear, hear, hear.) Now, how could this fact be accounted for, but by referring it to the fanaticism which the unrestrained perusal of the holy writings has produced? An ignorant man with a heated imagination, sits down to read the Bible; he is told that he is its best interpreter, and illuminated by a special grace. That special grace is but a lunar light, and fills his brain with madness: his delirious dreams are taken for the visitations of the Spirit, and the images of insanity for the pictures of heaven. But the Roman Catholic has no room for his invention in belief—he has a clear, an open, and a long trodden path to follow, and plods his way to heaven without wandering through that labyrinth in which the Protestant enthusiast is left without a clue—he has an ample scope for the affections of the heart, but has little space for the excursions of the fancy—his faith is regulated and certain—he is not cast, without chart or compass, upon the vague immensity which religion offers to the mind, but steers his course in a well known tract, by a steady principle and by a fixed and unrevolving light. The Protestant embarks in the Bible upon a voyage of discovery, while the Catholic makes at once for one great heaven, and by an ancient and familiar route. He had, perhaps, pursued this train of illustration too far, and had reluctantly compared the advantages of the two religions; but

he thought it right to observe, that what he had said was chiefly meant to apply to self-instructed innovators, and not to the members of the Established Church, whose hierarchy was as hostile as the Roman Catholic clergy to the reading of the uninterpreted Scriptures. Before he sat down, he should beg leave to make one or two observations on what had fallen from Mr. Kenny, who, like the pleader in Racine's comedy, had begun his oration at the commencement of the world, but had afterwards condescendingly passed to the deluge—(loud laughter.) *That gentleman had discovered in an injunction given to Abraham, a felicitous application to Ireland; Providence must have had the Hibernian School in view in patriarchal times.* He would not attempt to pursue him in his progress from Abraham to Moses, from Moses to king David, and from David down to Timothy, but he should follow Mr. Kenny from Jerusalem to Wexford, and beg to observe on the animadversions which he thought it proper to denounce upon a recent and unfortunate transaction. That event was deeply to be deplored, but it had been greatly misrepresented. *It was utterly untrue that the parents of the child had beheld its immolation.* It was sworn by the father, that the crowd was so great that he was prevented from approaching the priest, and that he did not even see what was going on. In the next place, Mr. Kenny had imputed a belief in the powers of exorcism to the Roman Catholic peasantry, as it resulted from their religion; but he (Mr. Shiel) should state a most important fact, sworn by the witnesses of the crown—namely, that Protestants as well as Catholics were present at one of those deplorable instances of human folly, and that a Mrs. Winter and her daughter, both Protestants, knelt down and called on God to assist Father Carroll in working the miracle. (Hear, hear, hear.) To attribute to Roman Catholics an exclusive belief in demoniacal possession, was most unjust. Doctor Warburton had maintained the doctrine, and it was one for which scriptural authority

might be quoted. He would ask Mr. Kenny whether the reading of the Bible by the lower orders was calculated to remove the common superstition, that persons afflicted with epilepsy are possessed by an evil spirit? Do not the Scriptures narrate many instances of exorcism? It is true that it is now held that the devil has been deprived of his prerogative; but surely a peasant in reading the Scriptures may think that what once was common is at present not impossible; and besides, *this very case furnishes an argument to show that the Scriptures require a comment; for assuredly it is necessary that the cessation of Satanic dominion should be explained to the individuals who peruse the example of its former sway; so far from thinking that the Scriptures are calculated to disabuse the people of this frightful infatuation, their perusal of them without a comment appeared likely to confirm their superstition.* He regretted that Mr. Kenny had alluded to this painful incident, because in doing so, he had expressed a detestation of the Catholic religion, which was utterly at variance with the repeated disclaimers of proselytism. If he, and those who acted with him, felt so deep an abhorrence of Popery, they could not fail to exert themselves to rescue the people from so disastrous a belief. It could not be credited that their execration would not involuntarily ooze out. It was not possible that such a metamorphosis should take place in Mr. Kenny, as that on one side of the poor man's threshold he should be a strenuous hater of Popery, but the moment he had entered his habitation to administer to his children a profusion of spiritual belief, he should be transmuted to an impassioned lover of the scarlet-vested damsel of Babylon. One advantage, however, had accrued from the honesty of Mr. Kenny's denunciations, and indeed from the whole tone of the proceedings. It was now clear that proselytism was their substantial object, and that education was only an instrument for the accomplishment of this darling pro-

ject. He begged pardon of the Society for having so long trespassed on them, and he was bound to say, that however great their collision of opinion, he had been heard with liberality and kindness. He should not abuse it by entering at large into another topic, upon which, before ladies, it might not be delicate to dwell. He alluded to the many passages of Scripture which were written with a force, and he might say, with such nakedness of diction, as rendered them unfit for indiscriminate perusal. There were parts of the Old Testament in which images of voluptuousness were presented to the mind, on which the imagination of a youthful female ought not to be permitted to repose. To those passages he should not, of course, refer, or point out the forbidden fruit. But he would venture to assert, that the Odes of Anacreon do not display more luxury of imagination, or combine more sensual associations than parts of the Old Testament, the perusal of which by women, was wisely forbidden by the Jewish church. It was idle to say that the grace of God would prevent the passions from taking fire. Our daily Orison contains a prayer founded upon human frailty, that we should be preserved not only from guilt but from temptation; and if the passages to which he alluded were unfit for an open citation in that assembly, he should not conceive them the appropriate theme of the virgin's meditations. The warm fancy of a young and blooming girl could not intrude into the sacred bowers of oriental poetry without peril. Besides the objections arising from the warm colouring of the divine pastoral of Solomon, which was a mystic representation of the conjugal union of the Church, with which unmarried ladies need not be made prematurely familiar; it should be recollected that the Bible contained details of atrocity at which human nature shuddered. Part of the holy writings consisted of a narration of facts which were of such a kind, that they could

not be mentioned in the presence of a virtuous woman without exciting horror. Should a woman be permitted to read in her chamber what she would tremble to hear at her domestic board? And shall her eyes be polluted with what her ears shall not be profaned? Shall she read what she dare not hear? Shall she con over and revolve what she would rather die than utter? But these were painful topics. They were forced into debate by those, who, in their anxiety to annihilate the religion of the country, forgot the risk to which its morality was exposed. And what good could the achievement of this object after all effect? In ceasing to be Catholics, were they certain that the people would continue Christians? Let this absurd scheme be abandoned; let the Irish peasant live and die in the religion of his forefathers; let the child rise up from the cradle in the same creed with which the father descended into the grave, and let the propagators of the modern dogmas who send their missionaries among us, remember the denunciation from St. Matthew, "Woe unto you, ye Scribes, ye Pharisees, ye hypocrites; ye compass the sea and earth to make a single proselyte, and when you have made him, he is twofold more a child of hell than before."

Mr. NOEL rose to reply to Mr. Shiel, in a speech of great eloquence, to which we cannot hope to do justice. He said, that however he might admire his abilities, he could not but lament his errors, which talent could not redeem; and although he might be inferior to Mr. Shiel in those oratorical resources, with which habit had made that gentleman familiar, he hoped he was his equal in candour and his match in sincerity. The gentleman had shewn himself much better acquainted with rhetoric than with the true spirit of Christianity, and he owned he thought that there was a little of profane imagination in his religion. He (Mr. N.) was careless of sarcasms, because he was influenced by the high motives of doing good, and of extending to others the

benefit of those holy writings from which he had derived so much consolation. The Learned Gentleman had ridiculed the variety of religious opinions in England. Let him look to the infidelity of France, and to the superstition of Italy, whose religion was like the exhalation of its pestilential marshes. It was the *malaria* of the mind. He should not blush at the comparison of his own country, and of that country he would say, that it was influenced by a real anxiety to advance the happiness of Ireland. He was sorry to hear Mr. Shiel say that the Roman Catholic religion was *not* founded upon the traditions of man. He owned that he preferred the word of God; never could any injury arise from the sincere perusal of the Holy Scripture, that was not meant for the exclusive use of priests, but for all mankind. It was not in the synagogue that our Redeemer preached the Gospel, it was among the poor, the lowly, and the humble minded. As to the objection that there were passages in the Bible unfit for general perusal, it had been repeatedly refuted; no pure mind could ever be soiled by the Word of God, and when did man or woman ever rise from its perusal with a vitiated spirit? He had no antipathy to the Catholic religion, but to the superstition which had been incrusting upon it. He could not even think of such a man as Fenelon, and other members of that church, without admiration; but it was from the Scriptures that they derived their spirit, if not their tenets. The hon. Gentleman proceeded with so mild and persuasive a tone to enforce his opinions, as to produce a sentiment of deep and general respect among all who heard him. He concluded amidst loud applause.

Mr. O'CONNELL replied to Mr. Noel in a powerful speech, in which argument, ridicule, and eloquence were blended together. We can only give an abstract of his first speech: He ridiculed the idea of English morality, and referred to the details of frightful atrocity in the English trials at the Assizes, and, above all, to the Parliamentary Reports. The

gentlemen, he said, came to educate the Irish women, let them look to their own. By the Parliamentary Reports on the Poor Laws, it appeared that 19 women out of 20 in England were mothers a month after marriage. Their "marriage baked meats did coldly furnish forth the christening tables." The gentleman, in speaking of the French Revolution, forgot that *fanaticism had done in England what infidelity had effected in France. Did his friend, the Scotch Captain, forget the sale by his own countrymen of Charles the First?* (Loud laughter.) Mr. Kenny had thought proper to vent his mirth upon the misfortune of Mr. Carroll.—How soon the parson undertook to roast the priest when he had him once on the spit; with what pious rancour he turned him round, and delighted in the popish dripping! The parson should not court a comparison with the priest. Where was the parson found? He was a shepherd that visited his flock at shearing time. Where was the priest? At the side of the bed of straw, impregnated with typhus, and performing the duties of his sacred religion with infection and death about him. Mr. O'Connell then entered into the argument upon the distribution of the Bible, and referred to Scripture and to the authority of the Fathers with great felicity, to establish his tenets.

Mr. FOPE followed Mr. O'Connell, and said, it was a mistake to suppose that such a variety of belief existed in England. There might be a shade of difference; but the same great body of Christians and Scriptural truth was to be found in the diversities of each. He strongly condemned the language in which Mr. Shiel had spoken of the impropriety of allowing women to read the Scriptures. He was greatly mistaken if he supposed that the word of God was the source of sensual thought, however his own imagination might throw poison into the sacred springs of holy truth. In no class could the reading of the Bible be attended with such results as he had described: much less among the lower orders, whose fancy was not so excitable as that of

the learned gentleman. The phraseology of the Canticle of Canticles was undisguised, but not impure. But there was no expression in it which could alarm the modesty of the humble tenants of the Irish cottage. Mr. Pope referred to several texts in Scripture to show the necessity of distributing the sacred writings among all classes of the community.

Mr. BRIC said, reluctant as he would be at any time to trespass upon public attention, he was still more unwilling to do so on the present occasion. The very advanced hour of the day, the presence of gentlewomen, the exhausted state of these, as well as of others, rendered, he feared, further discussion not very acceptable to many of those whom he had the honour to address; but he would say, that feeling a deep interest in the awful business before the meeting; feeling as a Catholic and as an honest man, that the object of those by whom the meeting was got up, was to pervert the minds of the Catholic children—to take them away from the religion of their ancestors—conceiving this scheme as pregnant with danger and misfortune, he would, at whatever hazard, contribute his humble share to oppose them. What he had to say might not make an impression—might not do much or do any thing for his cause; still he was induced to address them, because he really could not reconcile it to his feelings to remain silent when considerations of such deep interest as the religion of the people were at hazard. The Ladies and Gentlemen now before him, with whom he had the misfortune to differ, were, no doubt, fully impressed with the idea of their own sincerity. He did not mean to call their sincerity in question; and as, on the one hand, he was willing to give them full credit for their motives, so, on the other, he hoped it was not too much that they would admit that he also was actuated by honest feelings—by an anxiety to defend the integrity of his religion—to vindicate its sacred ministers, and to preserve the manliness, the morality, the natural affections and the best virtues of the

Irish people. He might be mistaken, but it was the firm conviction of his mind, that that venerable religion, that those virtues and those affections would, more or less, suffer, if the Bible Society succeeded in their views. The Gentlemen at the other side, he was aware, were ready to contend that the virtues of the nation would be enlarged, and the morals and the feelings of the people improved by the success of their projects. Mr. Bric proceeded to argue at great length, and in a very eloquent strain, against the Biblical system of education. We regret our limits will not permit us to follow him. He then observed, that he was encouraged to go on by the attention with which he was heard; he regretted that he was likely, late as it was, to trespass for some time longer on their time. Indeed it was clear that they could not come to any satisfactory determination that evening; he would therefore suggest, before he went further, the propriety of an adjournment.

This suggestion having met with the approbation of those about the Bench, Mr. Bric accordingly moved the question of adjournment to eleven o'clock the next morning, which was put and carried unanimously. The Chairman having left the chair, and the High Sheriff having been called thereto, Mr. O'Connell moved that the marked thanks of the Meeting be returned to Mr. Freeman, which was carried unanimously.

SECOND DAY, FRIDAY, SEPT. 10.

The Meeting was adjourned to eleven o'clock this morning, but long before that hour, the Court House was filled by Ladies and Gentlemen, who obtained access through the private entrances. When the public doors were thrown open, the rush was tremendous, and in a few minutes the Court House was crowded almost to suffocation.

Immediately on taking the Chair, Mr. FREEMAN opened the business of the day by expressing his earnest desire that all present would observe the same decorum by which the proceedings of the day before had been marked.

Mr. BRIC resumed his argument of yesterday. He said that, in course of his observations on the former day, he had endeavoured to show that unity in religion was much to be desired; he had shewn that unity in matters of faith distinguished the Catholic religion; whilst in England, religion presented nothing but a mass of discordant opinions and fantastic and extravagant enthusiasm. Did the hon. Gentleman suppose, that if they succeed in their scheme of turning the hearts of the people of this country from the religion of their ancestors, that they would not almost instantly destroy unity in religion? To what state would they be reduced? Deprived of guides and of instruction; driven out of the harbour where their faith had been so long and so safely sheltered; they would be cast upon the wide and turbulent sea of their own imaginations; exposed to the rocks and shoals of infidelity, and to the dangerous tempest of their own unruly passions. It was really too bad, that gentlemen who might exert their philanthropy in useful and necessary objects, should waste their energies, in thus conducting a crusade against the religion of a nation; it was too bad, that Catholic parents will not be allowed to have their children instructed in matters of faith by the prelates and by the priests of their own religion, but that strangers, ignorant of their faith, and for that reason avowedly hostile to it, should intrude upon them; if not to alarm, at least to vex and annoy. There was the hon. Gentleman direct from England to instruct the deluded Irish. That did not surprise him, because he presumed from the gentleman's rank, that he had abundance of money to spend. And there was his gallant friend, who came over, it was to be hoped, for the same laudable purpose. He was not surprised to see the gallant officer, because a Scotchman, and Scotchmen were to be found every where. But, for the sake of the peace and the quiet of the country, he conjured gentlemen to desist from a fruitless and distressing task; distressing to others as well as to

themselves. Let them attend in future to their own concerns, and leave the religious education of the poor children of Irish Catholics to the members of their own religion, for whom they felt so much veneration. They disturb the public mind; they may agitate the calm spirit of Christianity; but, notwithstanding their title, their wealth and power, they never would succeed in their attacks upon the religion of the country. The public opinion was against them; the Catholic Clergy, who had so strong a hold on the people, were decidedly against them. Why did they dare to interfere in the religious concerns of others? Would they tolerate so daring an intrusion on the part of the Catholics? Would they endure the insulting mockery? He would implore them, in the language of the Scriptures, which they seem so anxious to propagate, to do unto others as they would wish to be done unto themselves. But they might say that they were actuated by good motives—by motives of charity and compassion towards the Irish poor; that the religious education of the Irish was neglected, and that it were better to have them instructed in some religion, than to leave them to grow up in total ignorance and darkness. Such an assertion might be made, but would be an assertion wide of the truth—it would be a calumnious assertion, reflecting directly on the Catholic clergy and laity of Ireland. It was the universal practice in this country to instruct every Catholic child in the catechism. Every child, male and female, is examined in the book, not only at school, but at public examinations, generally held in the Chapel. And what did the catechism contain? It contained the fundamental truths of the Christian religion; it put forth its purest precepts; it inculcated the best virtues, the love of God, and the love of our neighbours. It set out the ten commandments, and it called upon the children to observe those commandments as they regarded eternal happiness, or feared eternal misery. They are commanded by that book to love their neighbours as them-

selves, for the love of God, and then the question is asked, Who are our neighbours? The answer is—all mankind. Such was the nature of the Catholic catechism—such were the precepts it enforced. But it certainly went farther; it impressed on the minds of youth a due and solemn reverence for the religion of their ancestors, and, therefore, it is not a book which the Bible Societies would wish to see in the hands of Catholic children. But was the Catechism the only source of their religious instruction? By no means. The early and the constant practice of religious duty which the Catholic church enforced—the necessity of prayer—the solemn office of confession—the awful sacrifice of the mass. Those sacred things, however they might excite the derision of ignorance and of bigotry, left upon the youthful mind the most salutary and the most lasting impression. Again, were the Catholics without schools—were they without books—were there no Bibles—no religious tracts sent amongst them under the sanction of their clergy?—They all recollected the strange charges which Mr. North was tempted to make in the House of Commons, on the question of education—charges of which he would say no more for the present than this, that they called forth from the clergy, in every part of Ireland, an indignant and satisfactory answer. From the returns made on that occasion, it appeared that the number of schools that had been formed—the number of children that had been instructed by the humble, unassisted, and calumniated Priests of Ireland, exceeded even what the warmest of their friends supposed. They were instructed in the useful rudiments of education, and in the principles of religion and virtue; they were supplied with books best calculated to promote their improvement. With respect to the religious tracts, he knew that the clergy were most anxious to supply their schools with those tracts as far as their very limited means admitted. It was a fact known to very few, that the Catholic bishop of Cork, a prelate in whose praise he would be silent, for it was

not necessary to praise him where he was so well known—that learned and pious prelate had, through his single exertions, put to press no less than forty-five religious tracts. The fact seemed to excite surprise—it was heard in public for the first time, because the pious prelate did not think it desirable to sing his labours in the streets or publish them on the walls—no, he, and those with whom he laboured, the pure and blameless priesthood of Ireland, sought not for human praise; they do not go about the country to exhibit themselves to the public gaze, to debate on their own merits, or upon other's vices; they were contented in secrecy and solitude to do the work of their heavenly Father, and were only forced into public when called to defend themselves against the attacks of rancorous bigotry. Now with respect to the reading of the Bible, he had, in the course of the discussion of yesterday, heard it confidently asserted that the Catholics opposed the reading of the Bible. Gentlemen were kind enough to take up much of their own and other's time, in order to show that the Bible was a sacred book; that it contained the great truths of Christianity, and that those truths ought to be known to all. Certainly it was an instance of amiable simplicity on the part of the gentlemen, who held forth for hours, in order to convince a Christian community that the Gospels of Christianity formed a proper book. What Christian ever expressed a doubt on the subject? What Catholic ever expressed a doubt of that sacred volume, which formed the foundation, he might say the great charter, of his religion? It was a calumny as gross and wicked as ever came from the poisoned lips of bigotry, to say that the Catholic clergy were opposed to the study of the Scriptures; the contrary was directly the fact—they read the book themselves—they constantly referred to it in their sermons and in their tracts—they recommended the perusal of it to the laity—they encouraged the publications of new editions; and at the instant he was addressing them, he believed that Mr. Coyne, of Dub-

lin, had in the press a new and cheap edition of the Bible. The perusal of the Scriptures was encouraged by the priesthood; but it was not degraded into a task-book, it was not forced without note or comment on the young and the ignorant;—that book, the exact meaning of which, in many material passages, had for so many ages filled all Christendom with disputes—that book, upon which the most learned, the most pious, the most illustrious men, at both sides of the question, disagreed—that book was not deemed by the priesthood of Ireland, a fit and proper book to put into the hands of little boys and girls, whose intellect was as feeble and unformed as their bodies, for them to explain those doubtful points—for them to turn away from assistance and instruction, and to put upon the Scriptures their own interpretation. He could assure them that in this religious, he had almost said in this fanatical crusade, they would never succeed; but if they thought otherwise, he conjured them as good men to pause. Let them reflect upon the consequences of their triumph—their object was, for they avowed it, to turn the child against the religion of his parents—to teach the child to scoff and scorn at what his parents held in pious veneration. O! what a bitter change—what a pang of shame and misery must it carry to a parent's heart, to see the child of his affections, instead of kneeling with him at the altar of God, to see him turn away with scorn from that holy place, deriding his parent's piety, and mocking that Sacrament in which is contained the bread of eternal life. He spoke before sisters, he spoke before mothers, he spoke before sincere and pious Protestants—he would ask them, which of them would wish to see their children tainted by adverse doctrines, renegades and recreants from the religion of their fathers? There was not one among them, perhaps, who would not rather see that child, however dear to their hearts, torn away from them by the hand of death, than to see his mind perverted and his religious opinions destroyed. Did he blame them for that? Oh,

no—they were sincere in their opinions—and to a sincere and religious heart no calamity could be so terrible. They seemed to agree with him in this—the softened countenances of those around him, bespoke in terms more eloquent than words, the feelings that worked within them; and now, he only asked of them to make the case of the poor Catholic parent their own—did they suppose that the poor Catholic was less sincere, less devoted to his religion than they were to theirs? No, they did not. As he besought them, then, as they would spare a parent's feeling—as they would wish, in the language of God's commandment, that the child should honour his father and mother—he besought them by all the obligations of true religion—by all the pious charities of humanity—as mothers, as sisters, as good men, he implored them not to invade the peace of families, and under the semblance of religion, to wither and waste away the best, the purest, and the dearest of all human ties—the tie that bound a child to his parent. He had heard it said that education in Ireland had made but little progress. He certainly regretted that education had not made a greater progress amongst us—but it was not the fault of the Irish people. The want of education in Ireland might easily be traced to the state of law and government. It was not long since it was held a crime by the law of the land—their Protestant ancestors made it a high crime in a Catholic to educate his child. That infamous act of parliament was repealed—but the moral effects of the laws survive the laws themselves. The Catholic has now permission to educate his child—but there is no encouragement—no government aid—the legislature has granted thousands to the Kildare-street Society, but not one farthing has been granted towards the education of the people. He had heard it said yesterday that there were but few religions in England—he believed there were more than two hundred; and he believed that those numerous and most fantastic religions were not the growth

of piety or of knowledge, but of ignorance and presumption—he believed they were caused by the Scriptures having been put into the hands of weak and uninformed people. He held in his hand an English newspaper, in the columns of which, “the most thinking people in the world” appeared absurd. The newspaper, which, by the way, was a High Church print, not inaptly described the thing as a specimen of cant and quackery: the advertisement commenced as usual with the name of a new religion, ‘The Revivalist Community.’ It stated that on Sunday, Aug. 18, 1824, a chapel in Spicer-street, Brick-lane, would be opened, when three sermons would be preached. That in the morning by Lucy Morgan, of Bury St. Edmunds, (loud laughter)—by the inspired Lucy Morgan, of Bury St. Edmunds; (continued laughter) that in the afternoon, by Mary Brown; (bursts of laughter) and that in the evening, by Mrs. Jones; (continued laughter.) I beg pardon, it was not Mrs. Jones—the ladies have it not all to themselves, it was Mr. Jones, of Northampton, who in all probability was an old woman in his own way—(laughter.) Poor Mr. Jones of Northampton! how I feel for you! Two to one against Mr. Jones of Northampton—(a laugh.) Lucy Morgan and Mary Brown, two damsels, I warrant you, who vindicate the privilege of the sex, two inspired young ladies, who could handle a sermon with far more dexterity than they could handle scissars; there they are on one side, and Mr. Jones of Northampton, on the other, (much laughter,) fearful odds, alarming inversion of the order of things. Why we know that one woman at any time can talk down two men, but here is one unhappy man opposed to two women—a species of martyrdom that certainly entitles him to the appellation of saint. Leaving this gentleman to repose on his bed of roses, I proceed to another notification: it is of a love feast. But I see the blush of modesty mantling the countenance of the ladies; and I will leave the feast of love to be described by others—(applause.) We have, however, an account of a scene at a

place of worship in the neighbourhood of Kensington Gravel-pits, which has nothing revolting about it, but certainly has something to amuse. It states the hour of worship, to be performed by a Mr. Waugh (a laugh), and by other individuals, whose names are equally musical and romantic as the sentimental sound of Waugh (a laugh); and it adds, that for the convenience of the friends who might come from a distance, dinner would be provided, in the vestry, at two shillings each (a laugh). I really think that the vestry of a church is rather an odd place to carry on the business of a tavern keeper (a laugh). It is, however, pleasing to observe, that whilst those worthy persons attend to their spiritual wants, the substantial refectory of the body is not altogether forgotten. For the gratification of the ladies, I should add, that good strong tea was also served up, price one shilling each. Those instances of fanaticism cannot be heard of without exciting merriment; but do they excite no other feeling? Do they give no cause of disgust and affliction? Do they convey no warning to those who are not lost in the vortex of fanaticism? Which of the ladies I now see around me would so far forget the delicacy of their sex? Which of them, forgetful of their sex, would mount a pulpit to rant and preach like those mountebank enthusiasts? How can the fathers of families look on such scenes without alarm? And yet they have met here together to endeavour to effect that moral revolution, which, in England, has made Lucy Morgan and Mary Brown become the preachers and the scandal of the Gospel. The spirit of fanaticism, if encouraged, may prove fatal, not only to the religion, but to the institutions of a people. I see on the bench some wealthy proprietors, and I assure them, that they will best secure their land by not interfering with the religion of the people. The Catholic religion, unlike the religion of those who brought King Charles to the block, is a religion favourable to government and established institutions. Men of property would do well not to seek its sub-

version. But the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Noel), whose mind is directed to matters of higher consideration, not only anticipated the fall of that religion; but he has expressed his deep conviction, that the people of Ireland never could enjoy that light of Heaven, because they adhered to their religion—I repeat, in the presence of the hon. Gentleman, that he made use of these memorable words, and he certainly has the manliness not to go back from what he said. I will not say that the observations of the hon. Gentleman proceeded from a bad spirit—from a heart full of rancour and bigotry; but this I will say, that the hon. Gentleman has paid, in this instance, but little regard to the propriety of language; he has betrayed gross ignorance of the religion which he has defamed, when he has blasphemously declared, that the light of eternal salvation could never shine upon its followers. Is it possible after that observation, and after the avowal that has been made of your object, that the people of this country will ever allow any interference of yours in the religious education of their children? You have removed the mask; from this day forward we will look upon you as enemies to our faith; and we will exert every effort to defeat your objects—to preserve from your artifice and from your violence the religion of our forefathers—a religion which has been consecrated by the sufferings of its adherents, which has not been impaired by the persecution of its foes, and which is likely to preserve the kindly and glorious influence of its sway long after the folly and the bigotry of the present hour shall be forgotten.

Mr. O'CONNELL said he did not know whether he should be pardoned for addressing the meeting at this late hour, and in this exhausted state, if it was not that he felt himself imperatively called upon by what he considered his duty. He had heard the liberal gentleman who was speaking when he first entered (Mr. Irvin) with great pleasure; he presumed that that gentleman was all he had described and more than his modesty permitted him to make known. He

was also delighted to hear Mr. Gordon; he liked even the raciness of his Scotch accent. That Gentleman began by abusing the ignorant and degraded Irish, and by so doing unintentionally hit at the Church which received two millions per annum for educating this abused and corrupted people. He had glanced at our late disturbances, and praised the Scotch, and small blame to him, above all the other people on the face of the earth. They were a bible-reading people it seemed; but some of the readers had turned radical reformers, and there had been disturbances amongst them too. But then there was a Captain Rock there, in the shape of five and twenty thousand Irishmen, and no doubt they had been the leaders in every disturbance. This reminded him of an announcement he once read in a Scotch Newspaper, it ran thus:—We are authorised to state that Archibald M'Even, who was hanged at the Canongate last Wednesday, was not a Scotchman, but that he was an Irishman. But, good God, did the Scotch gentleman read history: he bore a name honourable in his own country, and he was acquainted with the history of that country. Did he remember the days of the Covenant, when an attempt was made to force upon the people a religion which they disliked—when Scotland was the weak point through which the throne of England was threatened to be assailed? Did he recollect the days of the Camerons and Claverhouses—when the clergymen preached in the battle field? Could he be ignorant of circumstances which were made familiar even to females by the beautiful creation of that great Scotch genius whose works delighted all classes? Scotland, at the period referred to, was more turbulent than Ireland had ever been; her then population did not probably exceed two millions; her proportion of fighting men was very inconsiderable. Oh! had she then, like Ireland at the present day, a population of seven millions, she would have rolled back the tide of war until the Tower of London would have yielded to its mighty torrent—

(applause.) Nor were her disturbances healed until the project of enforcing her to embrace thirty-nine articles of the Established Church was abandoned. But let England, instead of sending school-boys and Captains to convert the unchristian Irish, conciliate them by taking off the degradation that oppresses them, and extend to them, as she extended to Scotland, liberty of conscience.—(cheers.) The elegance of England had been commented upon, and this of course was all ascribed to Bible reading. But was not Greece elegant although she was not Christian, and had not Rome the glory of conquering the world, before she knew of any other religion than paganism? He would now proceed to read, from the reports of the Bible Society, the state of various parts of England, from which it would appear that numbers of the English were sunk in the most horrid state of barbarism.

[Here Mr. O'Connell read an immense number of extracts from various reports of religious societies in England, which ran on to the following effect:

"There are *among us* those not less in *darkness* and ignorance than those that are to be found in the Pagodas of China, or who, amidst the deepest wilds of Indian forests, sacrifice their children, or prostrate themselves before demons, at whom they tremble, but whom, as gods, they adore." *Home Missionary Mag. Jan. 1820, p. 22.* Speech of John Wilks, Esq. Chairman at a Home Missionary Meeting.

At the same Meeting, the Rev. Mr. Irons stated—"In our own country there were MILLIONS whose consciences were *never* appealed to by faithful ambassadors, and who *never* heard of the Prince of Life." The Rev. Mr. Evans stated, "that he had travelled through districts of twenty miles, without a single school for religious instruction." The Rev. Mr. White observed, "He had preached among the villages, and knew their state—a state of the greatest ignorance, and of the most awful immorality." The Rev. E. A. Dunn "contended that he was the greatest patriot, who endeavoured to remove

the *darkness* and depravity which had so long degraded the inhabitants of our native villages."

At the first Annual Meeting of the Parent Home Missionary Society, held May 15, 1820, the Rev. J. Leifchild exclaimed, "O! where is the man who can think, without pain, that in this land of Goshen there should still be *so many* places shut up in miserable *darkness*!" (*Home Missionary Magazine*, June, 1820, page 145).—In the Report read at that meeting, it is stated, in reference to "Northumberland, Cumberland, *Durham*, and part of Lancashire," that "*Darkness* covers this part of England, and gross *darkness* the people" (page 2); that "the more internal parts of Northumberland are awfully destitute, and the people are living in the greatest darkness and wickedness" (page 3); that the county of Worcester "has been termed the garden of England, but in a moral light, it may be regarded as a waste, howling wilderness" (page 4); and again, "Another highly respected Minister writes, this part of the Island (Worcestershire and Hertfordshire) is, I believe, one of the darkest districts you will meet with" (p. 4). Staffordshire is stated to contain three hundred thousand inhabitants, *one half* of whom "are distributed over the whole space of the county, in small villages and hamlets, the greater part of whom are in a state to excite our commiseration. They sit in darkness, and the gloomy shades of over-spreading death" (page 4, 5). Again, "Oxfordshire presents but a dreary desert" (page 5), and a moral wilderness of awful dimensions" (page 7). As to a part of Berkshire, it is stated, "no one unacquainted with similar scenes, can form an adequate idea of the extreme ignorance of the inhabitants of those villages" (page 5). The writer adds, "not only these villages, but a number of others near us, are similarly situated: in one of them the villagers are in a state of *complete mental darkness*" (page 6).

The succeeding Annual Reports contain similar representations. The Rev. Thomas Sharp, in his Report of Devonshire, says, "Alas! I can

hardly suppress the rising tear, when I look eastward, and westward, and southward, beyond the sphere of my labours; for there are thousands and tens of thousands yet untaught. Much remains to be done even in the North of Devon, many a dark corner to be illuminated: many *British heathen* to be instructed" (Second Report of the Home Missionary Society, page 12). The framers of this Report state, that Mr. Sparks preached in four places, which "were mere moral wildernesses, and knew nothing of Evangelical truth" (page 14). They refer to numerous tracts of country which present scenes of moral desolation (page 18), and they add, that "thousands of their countrymen and countrywomen are perishing for lack of knowledge" (page 22). In conclusion, they observe, "an immense forest of destitute spots appears before us, the moment we cast our eyes on the map of our country . . . : . Every where our Missionaries are ready to weep over the spiritual desolation around them" (page 23).

In the Third Annual Report, it is observed, that there are in the neighbourhood of the Missionaries, "one hundred and forty-five villages, containing an awfully ignorant population of more than sixty thousand souls" (page 21); and it is added, "if such be the ascertained state of the villages in the neighbourhoods of the Missionaries, what vast multitudes would be found to claim your Christian compassion, were a correct estimate to be made of their condition throughout the kingdom?" It is further distinctly asserted, that "none but those who have taken the trouble to explore the village population, can possibly conceive of their wretched state of ignorance, and of the degree of vice that prevails among them." One of the Missionaries, on entering on his station, complains of "numbers greatly increased, moral degradation unusually deepened, ignorance with insensibility united, wickedness blended with every vice, and heightened into barbarity of manners" (p. 24); another says, "I verily believe that this is the worst place under the heavens: for men, women,

and children, seem to glory in blaspheming the name of the Lord" (p. 25). Another tells the Committee, "that his station exceeds every thing he ever witnessed for wickedness; for cock-fighting, bull-baiting, quarrelling, drunkenness, and lewdness, generally prevail;" (p. 25.) and the Committee emphatically adds, that "these are a few out of many facts that are to be gathered from the journals of the Missionaries" (p. 25); and they also state, "If more were needed to awaken your feelings, tales of ignorance could be related that would rend your hearts" (p. 31).

In the Fourth Annual Report, it is admitted, notwithstanding all their evangelizing labours, that "Infidelity, like a mighty flood, has been devastating society with the most awful errors, and moral abominations" (page 15).

Their Fifth Annual Report, adopted 5th May last, breathes the same desponding tones. The following paragraph may be taken as a specimen:—"Some of the Missionaries yet mourn. Mr. Drury laments the state of his neighbourhood in Sussex, and Mr. Hardy still sighs over Herefordshire." The latter says, "But a few years ago—a cloud of darkness—thick darkness, as the valleys of the shadow of death, hung over the people, and there was scarcely a ray of Gospel light to cheer the moral gloom. Sin abounded, and death reigned; and while the tears of affection fell over the graves of departed relatives, no man cared for their souls. Blessed be God! the scene is somewhat altered, and here and there is a rising light in the darkness, but it is painful indeed to witness so great a proportion of our fellow-immortals yet in the hand of the enemy."

The Reports of the Baptist Home Missionary Society are all in the same strain. I shall trouble you only with very few extracts from one of them—that for 1822—being the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of their operations. They say—"It is lamentable to reflect on nearly one hundred villages in the county (Hampshire), and on its borders, still destitute; the moral degradation, mental darkness, and

spiritual wretchedness of which are scarcely conceivable; *an ignorance of the only way of salvation exists as deplorably as among Pagans who never heard of the Bible,*" (page 5.) Again, the Committee "cannot refer to the counties of Warwick, Worcester and Hereford, without expressing the deepest regret, that where a kind Providence has clothed the face of nature with its richest verdure, and rewarded the toil of the husbandman with the most abundant produce, the basest ingratitude should be cherished, and immorality indulged in its grossest forms" (page 8.) In St. Mary's, Scilly, at the commencement of our Missionary labours, "but two persons could read the alphabet" (page 13); and at St. Martin's, for the space of six years, "Sermons, Bibles, Schools and Tracts seemed all like showers upon sand" (page 13). On St. Agnes "the people are deplorably ignorant" (page 13). In conclusion, the Committee states, "There are *thousands of villages* within the limits prescribed by your regulations, where the joyful sound of a preached Gospel is *never heard*" (page 15). So much for the "CENTRE OF LIGHT!!"

These were the English—this was the land of Goshen. He defied any one to prove that a considerable number of the Irish were in this state of religious darkness; they received as much of the benefits of education, as the limited means of their pastors would admit. But the English, who sent missionaries over here to convert the Irish, what a state they were in, according to their own reports. To those missionaries and to the Scotch gentleman, who boasted of the elegance and the glory of England, he would say, Take the beam out of your own eye, before you attempt to pick at the mote in ours. He would tell them, that the Irish considered their own priests, as little as they were thought of, enough for them. He confessed himself incapable of doing justice to their merits, and it might be that even his eulogy would offend them, their virtues were of that retiring and unobtrusive nature to seek not the reward of panegyric—their deeds of usefulness tended to an object far removed

above the praise of human eloquence, no matter of how high an order—(Cheers.) They were worthy to be the successors of those apostles—men who converted the nations of the earth to Christianity; for what nation was ever converted, unless through the preaching and pious zeal of the Catholic Priesthood? No privations could deter them from this work of salvation—no danger could affright them from their charitable ministry. Talk not idly of their battle's roar, it lasts but for an hour, and then comes death or glory; but—but, the labours of the Catholic Priest are interminable. He inhales the very air of contagion from every straw of the sick man's pallet, and in the most heart-rending duties of his office, he finds and feels the surest pledge and antepast of his future and eternal happiness. (Cheers.) Satisfied with our Creed and our ministers, he would therefore advise the Hon. young Gentleman and the Scotch Captain to go to the land of Goshen—to go to the savage and demoralized English, and make converts there; for though he should prophesy the downfall of popery until he became hoarse, he would never make a convert here—(loud applause.) The Scotch Captain has been candid. Before his prophetic vision, perhaps he (Mr. O'Connell) should call it his faculty of *second sight*, so characteristic in his countrymen; it was humorous enough to reflect how magically the Priesthood of Ireland—their sacraments and sacrifice—their altars, their images, and their temples, disappeared—and how extensively the new modes of Gospel regeneration, of which he was made one of the importers, prevailed over the land. (Cheers.) His speech reminded him, (Mr. O'Connell) of a poem he had read many years since; the heads of which might be applied to the honest Captain's address—

"He talked of Taaffe Welsh and Sawney Scot,
Of Lilubbarelo and the Irish Trot---
When seiz'd on sudden with a mighty quailm,
He rose and thunder'd forth---the hundredth
psalm."

(Applause.)—Mr. O'Connell, again in allusion to England, which he called the land of Goshen, said, in this howling wilderness was there not

room enough for the missionaries without coming here to prophesy that the Faith, which had stood so many bloody storms, should fall. That the Faith, the professors of which were not divided, or else it could not have stood 1800 years, should be subverted. There was no idolatry in the Catholic religion. It was insincere, after reading the perspicuous disclaimer and exposition of the catechism, to charge it with idolatry. For his part, he could never contemplate the cross, that symbol of his redemption, without thinking, deeply thinking, on the three long hours of suffering and of shame that his Redeemer hung upon it. (Applause.)—He would now ask, which of the Bible reading gentlemen agreed in their faith—he did not believe that any two of those he saw, held the same religious opinion. Did the young English gentleman and the Scotch Captain, who came here as missionaries, hold the same faith. They travelled, he supposed, together in a post-chaise, to overturn the Catholic religion. The English gentleman belonged to the nobility of England, and should be an Episcopalian, a High Churchman—if he was not, he must have swerved from the religion of his ancestors; and the Captain coming from Scotland, ought to be a Calvinist, unless he had thrown overboard his faith. How did these post-chaise companions agree on religious matters—did they toss up for the religion—or which of their religious tenets were their converts to embrace. It was a good joke of the English—sending a school-boy and a Scotch Captain to educate the wild Irish, and bring them over from the religion they had derived from their fathers—from the religion of which it was said that it was founded on a rock, and that the gates of hell should not prevail against it. The extracts he had read were from the Reports of the British Bible Society; and what did they prove, if true?—that the Englishmen were sunk in a state of savage barbarism—or if false, that the missionaries were fine romancers. Formerly the priesthood were censured, and it was said that they had endeavoured to prevent the spread of education, and that the

schools were not intended to proselyte, but to educate. Now, however, the object was avowed, and he was glad of this. One of the missionaries had prophesied the destruction of popery. Mr. Pope had mentioned some word in which his own translator differed from the original—was a child, an uneducated child, to decide, when Mr. Pope and his translator differed. There is no difficulty (continued Mr. O'C.) in answering the Reverend, perhaps it may be more correct to say the half-Reverend Mr. Pope, on all the texts he has quoted. Though a layman, he (Mr. O'Connell) would undertake to prove to any rational mind, that the Catholic religion was the only form of faith that had all the consistency and evidence of a Divine Revelation. Let any man of a different communion who heard him, (Mr. O'Connell) name the sect to which he belonged, and he (Mr. O'Connell) would tell him the person with whom, and the time at which it originated.—(Loud cheers.) But he would challenge each and all of them to specify a single point of Catholic doctrine, (for with mere differences of opinion, however numerous with respect to subjects unconnected with faith and morals, he had nothing to do), and state the period of its alleged introduction, and he pledged himself to produce the authority of historians, and the traditions of nations, to attest that it was preached and practised by every age, even to that of the Apostles and of their Divine Master. (Hear, hear, hear.) The church which the Saviour had founded could not have fallen into error. He built it upon a rock, and promised "that the gates of hell should not prevail against it." He delegated his Apostles, and of course their successors, with whom he was to remain, "until the consummation of the world," to teach all nations; and he gave them power to rule his holy Church, and all the texts therefore which, abstractedly considered, would seem to make other persons judges of his law, must obviously be received in the sense in which they, the apostles and their successors, explain them, else their authority would be utterly

nugatory—(hear, hear). If every one was at liberty to interpret the Scriptures according to his own way of thinking, oh! 'tis as plain as the sun at noon-day, that even Mr. Pope may have spared himself the labour of trying to reduce the almost countless sectaries in England, to what he termed "five divisions, five simple divisions"—(cheers)—and that the divine oracle, "He that does not hear the church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican," would be perfectly unmeaning—(much cheering). Mr. Pope had quoted a bundle of saints, but they all differed in opinion from him—if he appealed to St. Basil, St. Austin, St. Chrysostom, St. Cyprian, they all differed from him—they were all Catholics, some of them were the greatest founders of convents the Christian world ever produced, and all of them celebrated that divine Sacrifice of the Mass, which Mr. Pope, or any other Mr. who wished to rise in the Church by law established, should swear to be damnable and idolatrous. And one of them, St. Augustine, emphatically declares, that "he would not believe the Gospel, unless on the authority of the Catholic Church." (Cheers, loud and long continued.) He had talked of the differences of the popes, and told you that the popes of those days as well as the popes of this, were very extraordinary fellows. (Shouts of laughter.) He had also talked of the Acts of Council; but as councils, when general, constitute the teaching part of the church, it is clear that they cannot approve of error without contradicting the repeated assurances of the Redeemer, and forgetting their claim to the character given by St. Paul, of the church, that "it is the pillar of truth." [Mr. O'Connell here entered into an admirable historical narrative of the opinions of the Fathers of the Church, through which our limits will not permit us to follow him.] The Catholics were charged with altering the Scriptures. Did not Christ say, "this is my body?" and do not the Bible readers say, this is not my body? On this text alone, though all the new lights tell us that there is nothing obscure or difficult to be understood in the Old or New

Testaments, there are at least eighteen opposite opinions! But to those who hear the living, speaking authority of the Church of Christ, every obscurity brightens into evidence of faith. (Cheers.) The practicability of the real presence was proved when Christ transubstantiated water into wine at the marriage feast; its practicability was also proved when he multiplied a few loaves and a few fishes so as to feed an immense multitude, and fill twelve baskets with fragments, without ever losing their identity; and when he said, "unless you eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, you shall not have life in you." His answer to some even of his disciples, who said, "this is a hard saying, who can bear it?" explained his meaning. He did not correct their error, as he certainly would, if error they had been in; but his language was, "the words I have spoken to you are spirit and life; but there are some of you that believe not." (Long and continued cheering and applause.) Every Father of the Church, until the Reformation (as it was called) believed in the tenet. Mr. Pope said that it is contrary to Scripture that a woman should preach in public, yet, not long since, he (Mr. O'Connell) had heard a Quaker Lady preaching in Eustace-street, Dublin. [Here we observed several ladies of the Society of Friends, who attended at the Meeting, endeavouring to make their way from the Court House.] Again, Mr. Pope and Mr. Falvey had disagreed as to the meaning of a particular portion of Scripture; texts had been bandying about. Was there no tribunal to decide between them?—there was one tribunal—the Church. It was from tradition that the Protestant celebrated Infant Baptism and many other rites—not a single word concerning which was to be found in Scripture. The Roman Catholics respected the Testament, but they cling to tradition also. When St. Paul admonished the Thessalonians against false teachers and dreamers of new doctrines, what were his words, "Therefore, Brethren," said he, as a conclusion from his preceding remarks, "stand firm, and hold the

traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by our epistle." —(Thunders of applause.) He was surprised as well as delighted with the admissions which had been made that day. The Scotch Gentleman, by his prophecy, had confessed that proselytism was the real object.

Mr. GORDON rose to say, that it was proselytism—not from one religion to another, but from ignorance to knowledge. (Laughter.)

Mr. O'CONNELL resumed—He thanked the gentleman. He liked a good inuendo, and if he was drawing an information from what the gentleman had said, he would write—from "ignorance," meaning the Catholic Religion, to "knowledge," meaning the Protestant. (Loud cheers.) They knew what was really meant by these terms. If they got the benefit of funds, the Catholics themselves would educate the whole people. As a lawyer he could tell the meeting, that many years were not past since it was a legal crime for a Catholic Priest to exercise his functions. And there was the time under a pious Government, who doubtlessly read the Bible, when the premium for the destruction of a wolf, and the production of a Priest's head was of equal amount. (Hear, hear, hear.) Something had been said of the charity of England, they had given 100,000*l.*, but it was not until whole parishes had got extreme unction that it arrived; he thanked the individuals who came forward, but he did not thank the nation for this; let those not talk who had degraded our gentry; broken the spirit of our people; and paid back that beggarly charity; they had scoffed at our religion; yet they talked of charity. He would say to the English, do justice before you preach religion; send Missionaries, not to the South, but to the Orangemen of the North. (Thunders of applause.) Of all the Societies established in the "sister" country, romantically styled the land of Goshen, for bringing the light of the Gospel to the hovel of the Irish Catholic, is there one, or has there been one, to humanize that great moral and political monster, the sanguinary and anti-social Orangeman? (Thunders of applause.) Oh, no;—here

the cloven foot of our benefactors appears. Proclaim honestly that conscience is free; destroy that worst of monopolies—the monopoly of religion; and suffer the poor, the patient, and the persecuted Catholic, to live and die undisturbed in the religion of his forefathers. (Immense applause.) But he laughed with supreme contempt at the undermining; at the miserable plans by which they attempted to make the people believe that they were coming as friends; at the insulting policy which induced them, when the people asked for bread, to give them a stone.

The Bible men did not attempt to put any motion, and the meeting was dissolved without passing any resolution whatever.

TO READERS IN IRELAND.

I HAVE received a Letter from a gentleman of Belfast, respecting a statement (calculated, as he says, to misrepresent) which appeared in the Register of the 2d of October, under the head of Markets. The statement relates to a *failure* in Belfast; which failure, as my readers may easily believe, *I never heard of*, till this gentleman wrote to tell me of its having been improperly noticed in the Register. To the insertion of *market reports*, I cannot, of course, be supposed to pay any attention. But, I thank the gentleman for his letter; and I can assure him, and all persons who may be concerned, that, if this report is not correct, I very much regret that the Register should have been the medium of its circulation. W. C.

City, October 13, 1824.

BACON.—A few bargains have been made for *new*; some as high as 56*s.* on board.—Landed, 53*s.* to 55*s.*

BUTTER.—The trade have at length begun to buy Butter on speculation; and the consequence has been a great advance in price.—On board: Carlow, 88*s.*; Waterford, 84*s.* Landed: Carlow, 90*s.*; Waterford, 84*s.* to 86*s.*; Dublin, Limerick, or Cork, 84*s.* to 86*s.*; Dutch, 96*s.*

CHEESE.—Old Cheshire, 80*s.* to 88*s.*; New, 70*s.* to 74*s.*; Double Gloucester, 60*s.* to 70*s.*; Single, 50*s.* to 58*s.*